

HOLY JUMPERS

LIVE BY

LEAPS AND PRAYERS

New York.—Hidden on a little New Jersey farm, a community of sixty persons, one-half of them children, are trying to vitalize a complete reaction against money greed, hypocrisy, and the present-day Christian church and to keep it alive by religious hysteria.

They depend on "faith" (i. e., prayer) for food, clothing, and the bare necessities of life.

They have followed the injunction of Jesus to sell their goods, give the proceeds to the poor, and follow Him. Medicines and physicians are forbidden, and their only treatment for disease consists of prayer and anointing the body with oil.

Officials of the state of New Jersey say that if any one dies after such treatment those concerned are guilty of criminal negligence and indictable for manslaughter.

The community is managed on the co-operative plan, no one receiving wages for work, and all supplies going into a common fund, the men and women sharing the work on an equal basis.

Converts are kept in a high state of religious excitement by a conglomeration of Biblical text, sophistry, and slang, and talk of modern saints and miracles.

Seeking to live according to Biblical injunction, they work themselves into a frenzy, march, dance, and leap high in the air, hence their name, Holy Jumpers.

A member of the community has already been taken to the Somerset County Insane Asylum suffering from religious mania.

What the Jumpers Are Like.

Such, in brief, is a summary of the lives of the Holy Jumpers on their farm near Weston, a station on the Reading railway five miles southwest of Bound Brook. Attention was attracted to them by a report that they were to invade New York in the manner of "Elijah" Dowie and his Zionists. What manner of people are these who would fill Broadway with their cries and wild dances? The question led to a visit to Weston.

"Where are the Holy Jumpers?" the reporter asked a farmer he met on the way.

"Right down thar on the towpath where yer see that barn and windmill," he replied. "Do they jump? Yer bet they do. I was at their prayer meeting last Sunday. One of 'em—Brother Harman, they called him—man as big as you, six feet high—Waal, Brother Harman yelled 'Hallelujah!' jest as loud as he could, gathered up his legs under him, and jumped—it looked as if he jumped most as high as that thar lampost."

"They're praying most all the time, too. Some weeks since one of the fellows here was a-comin' up the towpath and chanced to look over toward the Jumpers' place. Sure as I'm here, thar was a Holy Jumper standin' atop their haystack, his hands up in the air, praying for all he was worth. Guess he was praying about the hay."



"These Jumpers seem to be decent enough, though," the farmer added, "only they keep mostly to themselves."

Thus primed, the reporter walked down the Delaware and Raritan canal to the Holy Jumpers' farm to meet one of the most curious experiences to be found near New York.

Reporter Unconvinced.

He went to scoff; he could not stay to pray. The hymns, sophistry, and the plight of 30 little children were too unconvincing; his sense of humor too acute. Yet, as he left, one question was burning in his mind: Are these simple, possibly misguided people solving the great social question of co-operation by the mere force of their religious zeal, where others have failed, especially in the famous Brook Farm experiment, by an excess of theory and knowledge?

"Zarephath." A big sign at a turn of the road bore the name of the Holy Jumpers' settlement. Lower down, at the entrance to the dooryard, was an arch and "The Pillar of Fire" on it.

A "saint" passed on a bicycle. He wore the uniform of the sect—a black shirt and helmet. The men in the mar-

ket gardens on either side had the garments of the "workers"—blue shirts and breeches. The "sister" who received the reporter wore a dress of similar material.

In the bare reception room one sound predominated over all others. Outside were sunshine and the song of life—the click of the windmill, locusts, and bees buzzing in a cornfield, the chatter of children, the sound of hammers as the workers raised a big tent for the camp meeting. Inside was the sound of hymns pounded out on a hard-tuned piano, persistently, monotonously, endlessly until the visitor thought of the most maddening in the list of ancient tortures—the steady drip of water on a man or woman's head.

"You have been very successful here!" began the reporter.

"The Lord's blessing has been upon us," the "sister" answered absently, as if in a dream or listening to the torturing hymns.

Home Is Gift of Believer.

"You own this place?"

"Yes. It was given to us about two years ago by Mrs. Garretson—Mrs. W. P. Garretson. She saw the true light—the light of the Lord in faith—she and her son and her two daughters. We have been here about a year and a half. There are 80 acres of land and 30 grown people, some of them married, but mostly young men and women, and about as many more children. They have given up all their worldly goods and followed Him."

"You must have plenty of money, then?"

"Oh, no," with a smile. "People with worldly goods are not eager to give them up and follow the Lord."

Gradually more facts came out after persistent questioning. Six years ago, Mrs. Alma White, wife of a Methodist preacher in Denver, was inspired to preach on her own account. The conference of the Methodist church would not make her a full fledged minister. But "the Lord blessed her in singing," so she started her own church. She calls it the Pentecostal Union, her neighbors, "The Pillar of Fire"; the public, the Holy Jumpers. The "sister" who was talking called it "the holiness movement—the Methodist church as it was in the days of Wesley, before people thought only of worldly things and the ministers of preaching and prayer for wage."

Mrs. White is still the head—the Mrs. Eddy, the Mrs. Piper—of the sect. She lives in Denver, where the Holy Jumpers have a Bible school and 150 missionaries and the union got a charter in 1902. Mrs. White's brother, C. W. Bridwell, is the head of the farm at Weston, which is the eastern headquarters of the sect. There are other mission houses in Los Angeles, and Lafayette, Ind., with a dozen missionaries each.

Have Biblical Authority.

"What are the peculiar ceremonies of your sect? You march and dance?"

"Oh, yes," the girl replied. "Are we not told in the Bible how David

danced before the Ark of the Covenant, 'yea, and was exceedingly glad'?" Did not Miriam dance with joy when Israel was delivered from the hands of the Egyptians and the Red sea flowed back and confounded the enemies of the Lord's people? Again, in the New Testament the dance is mentioned as a part of religious worship."

"Yes, and singing—even with cymbals and spawns," quoted the reporter.

"Yes—yes—we use cymbals, drums, too. And we often sing to the music of banjos and guitars."

"You have harps, too?"

"We play on autoharps. But most of our music is on the piano. As we sing, we dance as they did in the old days, marching about, and jumping up, and down in our gladness. That is why they call us Jumpers."

These were the words of the religiousist, the sentimentalist. On the other hand, strangely bald and strangely compounded of Scriptural phrase and modern sophistry is the official explanation of the jumping habit. Here it is:

Why They Jump.

After they had organized into a church, entirely independent of everything that

was backslidden and out on the line God wanted, He began to give light on many important doctrines which we preach and practice to-day. One that has meant more to our people in many ways than anything else, was the holy dance. In the old business movements, there was occasionally a man that would jump up and down when he was "moved by the Spirit," as they said, but for a whole church to jump at the same time in union was something that had never been heard of in any religious organization. The Lord showed Sister White that He was willing to revive the holy dance, and that it would be pleasing to Him for the whole church—men and women—everybody that was saved—to go to praising Him in the dance. She had seen a few men jumping around in religious services, but not in the sense of the holy dance, as we have it to-day, where all participate in union.

In the holy dance in our services, the sexes never mingle, men dance alone and together and likewise the women. When they went at it all heaven smiled upon them, and greater things were opened up through it than they had any conception of.

One of the Denver newspapers called us the Jumpers in its headline, and from that time the public has taken us up and is the name by which we are known from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The name is, perhaps, attached to us in derision, but we cheerfully accept it and go on jumping. Hallelujah!

Are Early at Devotions.

The "Jumpers" get up in the morning at 6 o'clock and pray till breakfast at 9. They pray singly or together, from then till night, in the fields, on the shady banks of the neighboring brook, in the silence of their chambers. They hold services three times Sundays, with more prayers, songs, jumping, and "testimonies." When a missionary sets out to preach,

they gather and pray for him. They say one of these workers left for Paterson penniless, but when they prayed a stranger came up to the traveler and gave him \$2. The Jumpers cite numerous cases in which they have "prayed themselves into" shoes, uniforms and food with no trouble at all.

"Last week," to quote Bridwell, "we had no money with which to purchase certain supplies and meet some payments, but the Lord sent us in a sufficient sum, and has been sending us in smaller amounts from day to day."

New York Can Wait.

New York—"the purple woman of Babylon"—will not hear their prayers for the present. They have no immediate plans for coming here as "Elijah" Dowie did. Their missionaries, however, have already preached here as they have in Paterson, Newark, New Brunswick, Somerville, Bound Brook, and Philadelphia.

When a person is ill they pour oil on his or her body and pray—that is all, they say. The body is anointed because people mentioned in the Bible did it. Their idea of "healing" by prayer is made clear by this case reported by Bridwell. He says:

The other day one of our sisters unwittingly swallowed a piece of broken glass, and another piece lodged in her throat. Her condition became quite serious, and we saw at once that God would have to undertake. A prayer meeting was called, in which a number of persons implored the Lord for her immediate relief. While we were assembled the victory came; our sister began to praise the Lord and claimed deliverance. Suddenly she started shouting uproariously and, turning about, we saw a piece of glass in her hand that had been dislodged from her throat. She had endeavored a number of times before to get it out without avail. Since then she has been all right, and testifies that a miracle was wrought in her behalf.

Conflict with State's Laws.

These methods of treating disease are in direct conflict with the laws of New Jersey. When a person dies in Weston the fact must be reported to Dr. William C. Long of Somerville, county physician of Somerset county, in which the settlement is located. A failure to do so is punishable with a fine of \$500. The county physician must investigate the cause of death, and if he finds it was due to neglect, abuse, or violence, he refers the case to one of the coroners of the county. At the office of the prosecuting attorney of Somerset county it was said that if a person should die without medical attendance and after no other treatment than the pouring of oil and prayer the persons involved could be held for criminal negligence and an indictment for manslaughter would probably follow.

The first death at Zarephath of which County Physician Long has knowledge occurred last February. A man in the community fell from the roof of a barn and was fatally injured. A doctor was hastily summoned from Bound Brook, but could not save his life. The body was buried on the farm—the first in a plot of ground set aside by the Jumpers for their graveyard. No other deaths had been reported from Zarephath, Dr. Long said.

In June last, when one of the women in the community was seized with religious insanity, there was no place to keep her in the settlement. Dr. Long was notified and had her sent to the Somerset County Insane asylum.

As the sister continued her conversation with the reporter, the monotonous notes of the piano had been merged with the click of the windmill, the hum of bees, and the chatter of children. Then a man and a woman began to talk in the next room. They might have been quarreling. Their voices were pitched high, now both speaking together unintelligibly. Then followed silence for a moment, then a single voice in great excitement:

In Fervent Prayer.

"Oh, help, help us—Show us the way—Oh, we've done wrong—We thank Thee—We bow before Thee—Help—help us—O Lord—"

The communistic plan of Zarephath is a success, if the rich fruits of field, garden, and truck patch count for anything. At the beginning of every week the work of the colony is divided among the men and women, with little or no distinction between the sexes. The men wash dishes, cook, and make beds, just as the older boys plow and the women work in the gardens. In the Zarephath building the men are lodged at one end, the women at the other, and the children on a lower floor.

They eat two meals a day. Breakfast is at 9 in the morning and dinner at 4. Each is preceded by prayers, and perhaps with testimonies, singing, and marching.

"All of these services, the prayer meetings, our marriage service, and the ceremonies at the graves have no regular order," explained the sister.

"It is largely arranged as the spirit of God moves us."

Life of the Little Jumpers.

Scriptural injunction is followed in the kitchen as well as the bare little chapel. Pork is eschewed as unclean; so are "fish without scales." Fruits and cereals form the bases of the favorite dishes.

What of the 30 little children who live in such surroundings? They pray as they play. Their ills are treated, too, with oil poured on their bodies and by prayer. They learn to jump and go to the meetings and give strange "testimonies."

Here is a prayer which the Jumpers credit to Glenn Plank, aged three:

"Dear Lord, we thank you for helping us to sing songs. I thank You for making my ear well. Supply our needs for this day and send in some dollars. My shoes are awful bad, send me in some new ones, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

Services for Children.

The children have special services to pray for clothes and the missionaries. They have prayer meetings every morning from 6:30 to 7:30 o'clock. They also have "praise services" distinct from those of their elders. They range in age from babyhood to 10 or 12 years. "In the school term" one of the Jumpers explained, "we also teach them in secular knowledge, including some of the high school branches."

Indeed, children may be called a star feature at Zarephath. The farm was given by Mrs. Garretson for a children's home as well as for missionary work, and in the notices of the camp meeting the building is called a "children's home."

Characteristic of the sect is Bridwell's description of the children when he recently returned from the west. Their enthusiasm evidently filled his heart with gladness, for he says:

"We were delighted once more to meet the children and to hear them pray and testify. God is certainly blessing this department of our work and helping the little ones to become faithful in His service. They have their little trials and experiences, and win battles which mean more in their lives than any of the great historical conflicts of this world."

A Gliding Boat.

The new gliding boat made in Paris by Levasseur and Lein consists essentially of a light, pointed main section, which is connected by a light wood platform two feet long to a flat tail 30 feet long. The forward section contains the motor, from which a shaft runs to the propeller in the tail. The rear end of the tail is almost submerged, while the forward end and the main boat float on the surface and are almost lifted out of the water by the action of the propeller. The new 50-horsepower eight cylinder Antoinette motor is used.

In calm weather the new form of boat glides very rapidly on the surface of the water and in rough water—this being the special advantage claimed over sliding and ordinary boats—it is able to run at a fair speed.

Business Appreciation.

Herr Hirsch—That man Levi has got his eye on our Rosa. He's a thundering good man of business and he can have her if he wants. He once got some money out of me in payment for some things I had of him."

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From the State Capital

Information and Gossip Furnished by Special Correspondent at Lansing.

Lansing.—Miss Luella M. Burton,

deputy state factory inspector, has given out an interesting statement showing that child labor in Michigan is on the increase. There were 5,865 in 1906 and 5,995 employed in Michigan in 1905, showing an increase of 130 children in the various factories, workshops, hotels and stores. There is no way of ascertaining the number employed in the different street trades, such as newsboys, bootblacks, etc., or in the fields.

"When we take into consideration the large amount of foreign population coming to our state each year, statistics showing that in the first six months of 1906, in round numbers, 33,000 foreigners came to Michigan, to my mind the increase in child labor is largely accounted for," says Miss Burton.

"At present children from 14 to 16 years of age are allowed to work ten hours per day. Last winter bills were passed raising the age limit at which children might be employed where their life or limb is endangered or their morals depraved, from 16 to 21 years for females and 18 years for males. The age limit where children are employed in any theater, concert hall or place of amusement where in-

toxicating liquors are sold was raised from 16 years to 21 years. It may surprise some to know that occasionally I find children born here in our own Michigan who have never been to school a day in their lives, and who do not even know the alphabet."

M. A. C. Needs New Quarters.

Architect E. A. Bowd is completing plans for the new agricultural building which is to be erected at the M. A. C. The new building, which will cost in the neighborhood of \$120,000, will be almost a duplicate. It is said, of the new mechanical engineering building recently torn down. The plans will be submitted soon to contractors, whose bids will be opened September 15. More room is needed for experimentation in products of the soil, for soil study, laboratory work, etc. All present quarters, it is said, are inadequate for the increase of work and for the number of students yearly enrolling—in that line of study. Probably not much more than the foundations will be laid by the time winter sets in.

Closes Big Timber Deal.

One of the largest timber deals that has taken place in northern Wisconsin in recent years was consummated a short time ago. The Cisco Lake Lumber company, of Wausau, has bought from G. F. Sanborn Lumber company, at Ashland, a tract of timber land in Michigan for \$500,000. Some time ago the Cisco Lake Lumber company purchased a large tract of timber in this state, and the big timber area just secured joins the one obtained some time ago, making the holdings of this concern very large.

Michigan an Agricultural State.

For many years Michigan was almost exclusively an agricultural and mining state. That is not true to-day, and it will never be true again, for many great industries have come to us and others are coming, but it remains true, none the less, that Michigan is still one of the large agricultural states, and will continue to be one so long as present climatic conditions and the natural fertility of her soil endure.

Complain of Low Water.

Lower water in both rivers and in Pine lake than there has been before this summer has resulted from the recent rainless season. Crops have also suffered materially because of the drought. Farmers in some sections have difficulty in supplying their stock with water. The small streams depended on in the pastures near Pine lake and Haslett park have in many cases dried up. Corn and sugar beets are now at a critical stage, and a few more days of dryness will prove disastrous.

Still Seek Forestry Head.

President J. L. Snyder, of the Agricultural college, states that as yet no one has been found to take charge of the forestry department, which has been left without a head by the death of Prof. E. E. Bogue. "It is difficult to find an experienced man for such a position," said President Snyder. "There are many young men who have been in the work a short time, but most of those who have had very many years of experience must have received some foreign training."

Consulate for Michigan Man.

Samuel I. Lee, of Michigan, has been appointed consul at Nogales, and James P. Worden appointed to Bristol.

Practical Points.

Christ crucified is the most conspicuous object in the history of the world. It is the center around which the whole moral and religious warfare of the world is gathered.

The power did not lie in the brazen serpent, but in God himself who could bestow healing upon those who showed by their looking up to it at his Word that they believed in God and repented of their sin.

Salvation was by faith, the only way in which free pardon can be offered without increasing the sin of the world.

Some of the events recorded during his period are: 1. Korah's Rebellion (Numbers 16), which grew out of the long delay and disappointed hopes.

2. Aaron's rod budded (Numbers 17) to prove that Aaron was the divinely chosen high priest.

3. The death of Miriam, the sister of Moses (Num. 20:1).

4. Water from the rock at Meribah and the sin of Moses that kept him from entering the promised land (Num. 20:2-13).

"And the people spake against God, and against Moses." Their bitter feelings grew so strong that they were expressed in words. Their former murmurings at Kadesh had been treated leniently, and water had been supplied, apparently at their angry demand. They seem to have interpreted the miracle there as an instance of mercy in spite of their wicked course, but as a response to it; and they therefore now repeated the experiment of insurrection.

Thus the Israelites tempted God (1 Cor. 10:9; Heb. 3:9). They put his patience and forbearance to the test, and did all they could to make him give them up as hopeless.

The Fiery Serpents of Sin.—No better emblem of the results of sin could have been given to the Israelites, or to us. "The true, peculiar, pernicious, fiery serpents were their murmuring disposition and complaints against Jehovah."—Lange. Sin is like a fiery serpent, often beautiful in appearance, and secret in its approach. But the effects are pains that only fire can express.

Repentance and Salvation.—Vs. 7, 9. Confession, V. 7. "We have sinned." The evil effects of sin made them feel conscious of their sin and its greatness. The real evil is the sin, and not the punishment. But it is only by the punishment that men realize the evil of sin itself.

"Against the Lord, and against thee." All crimes against man are sins against God. And all sins against God work wrong to man.

"And Moses prayed for the people," expressing their desires and feelings. There is real power in intercessory prayer. Their praying made it wise and safe to give blessings that would have been an injury to those who had not the spirit of prayer. One of the objects of the punishment was to turn their hearts to God.

The Cure.—Note in what a peculiar and yet blessed way the prayer was answered; not by removing the serpents, as they probably expected, but by a way that healed their souls as well as their bodies. So Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was not removed, but God's grace was made to abound as a blessed fruit growing on that stem.

As the sin and punishment of the Israelites were the fruits of unbelief, the true method of help was first to restore faith and then healing.

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